

[From the San Francisco Chronicle]

U.N. PEACEKEEPING IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR

Madeleine Albright, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, threw down a gauntlet two weeks ago: "This administration," she pledged, "will not allow the hullabaloo over (the GOP Contract with America) to cause the Charter of the United Nations—the 'contract' of Truman and Vandenberg and Dulles and FDR and Eleanor Roosevelt and the generation that triumphed over the Nazis—to be ripped to shreds."

This week, President Clinton himself should publicly join in that pledge with a veto vow when the House of Representatives takes up passage of the misnamed National Security Revitalization Act—a transparent effort to fatally undermine the U.N.'s central security role: peacekeeping.

Under the guise of making the U.S. rule in U.N. peacekeeping more accountable to Congress, the bill would dramatically cut U.S. financing, virtually prohibit the deployment of U.S. forces under foreign command and require congressional approval before a single American soldier is sent into a U.N. peacekeeping operation—something Congress has never before found the political courage to do.

The financing restrictions are ludicrous in the extreme. By requiring that all voluntary U.S. military contributions to missions approved by the Security Council—such as logistics and transport support—be deducted from the U.S. peacekeeping assessment, the legislation could actually result in the U.N. owing money to the United States.

As Secretary of State Warren Christopher has testified: "Such a proposal would eliminate all U.S. payments for U.N. peacekeeping. It would almost certainly lead our NATO allies and Japan (which also make large voluntary contributions) to follow suit. * * * It would threaten to end U.N. peacekeeping overnight."

Certainly the explosion of U.N. peacekeeping demands in the wake of the Cold War, their rising costs and the increasingly complexity and danger of the missions require more critical attention. But Washington has already unilaterally reduced its peacekeeping assessments from 31 percent to 25 percent, and the Clinton administration last May imposed strict new standards for U.S. participation.

Today, fewer than 1,000 Americans are wearing blue helmets, and the U.S. financing contribution is less than 0.5 percent of all foreign policy and national security spending. What we get for that is enormous global leverage and burden sharing in pursuit of direct and indirect U.S. interests—the ability, in many cases, to achieve goals at a fraction of the cost of unilateral action.

Passage of this legislation would, in effect, turn this 50th anniversary year of the United Nations into a de facto funeral. That must not be allowed to happen.

CRIMINAL ALIEN DEPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. LAMAR S. SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 10, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 668) to control crime by further streamlining deportation of criminal aliens:

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I would like to enter into the RECORD my strong support of H.R. 668, the Criminal Alien Deportation Improvements Act of 1995.

The escalation of crime is robbing Americans of the freedom to walk their neighborhood streets, the right to feel secure in their homes, and the ability to feel confident that their children are safe in their schools.

An increasing amount of crime is being committed by noncitizens: both legal and illegal aliens. About 25 percent of all Federal prisoners are foreign-born. An astounding 42 percent of all Federal prisoners in my State of Texas are foreign-born. Recidivism rates for criminal aliens are high—a recent GAO study revealed that 77 percent of noncitizens convicted of felonies go on to be arrested at least one more time.

The Bureau of Prisons estimates that over 75 percent of noncitizen inmates are confined for drug law violations. Drug law violations are serious and these criminals should be required to serve their full sentences. Because of the porous nature of the border, drug traffickers who are deported before the completion of their sentences often come back across the border into the United States.

The Criminal Alien Improvements Act of 1995 further expedites the deportation of criminal aliens after they have served their sentences. The act contains many of the provisions I sought in an amendment to last year's crime bill and I thank the bill's authors for including those.

This bill increases the list of aggravated felonies for which an alien can be deported. Transportation for the purposes of prostitution, smuggling aliens, counterfeiting, trafficking in stolen vehicles, and bribery of a witness are all very serious crimes. Aliens who commit these offenses should be deported immediately upon the completion of their sentences. Under H.R. 668, the Attorney General will no longer have the ability to grant relief from deportation to aliens convicted of aggravated felonies.

The bill also expands the number of crimes for which failing to appear to serve a sentence qualifies as an aggravated felony. This sanction has only applied in the past to crimes that carry a sentence of 15 or more years. H.R. 668 lowers the floor to 5 years, and will send a strong message to criminal aliens who fail to show up for sentencing.

H.R. 668 allows the INS to exclude aliens who commit serious aggravated felonies, and are sentenced to at least 5 years, but are released in less than 5 years on parole or due to prison overcrowding. Noncitizen aggravated felons should not be admitted to the United States, and those who are here should be deported as soon as possible. This bill significantly strengthens the Government's ability to deport criminal aliens by eliminating the gap between the end of their sentences and the date of deportation.

H.R. 668 also ensures that an alien who illegally reenters the country after being deported, may only challenge the original deportation order after exhausting all administrative remedies, and only if the deportation order was unfair. It further provides that any alien convicted of an aggravated felony who is not a legal permanent resident is presumed to be

deportable. Judicial review of a petition to stay the deportation order will be limited only to determining the identity of the alien and confirming that he or she was convicted of an aggravated felony.

Too few criminal aliens are being deported today. The deportation process can be years in length. H.R. 668 will streamline the process by eliminating frivolous challenges to deportation orders. The INS needs all the help they can get in speeding up deportations, and we can give them that help by passing this bill.

Americans should not have to tolerate the presence of those who abuse both our immigration and criminal laws. Criminal aliens should be on the fast track out of the country. This bill addresses the concerns of the American people by giving the INS and prosecutors tools they need to expedite the deportation of criminal aliens.

I am especially pleased that the bill includes provisions granting wiretap authority to assist INS in apprehending alien smugglers. Alien smuggling is a most despicable crime. It hurts Americans by facilitating illegal immigration, and places illegal aliens in human bondage. Those smuggled by organized rings are often required to work off the smuggling fees. Others must sell drugs or their bodies for the smugglers.

These organized smuggling rings are a grave threat to the welfare of all individuals—both Americans and aliens. For this reason, I am also pleased to see a provision that makes alien smuggling a predicate offense for the application of RICO laws. It is imperative that we send the strongest possible message to alien smugglers; a message that will be enforced to the full extent of the law.

Finally, H.R. 668 transfers control of the Criminal Alien Tracking Center created in last year's crime bill from the Attorney General to the INS Commissioner. I believe that this is a positive step toward removing bureaucracy and excessive redtape from the deportation process. I am also pleased that the tracking center, renamed the Criminal Alien Identification System, is directed to work closely with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies to identify criminal aliens for deportation.

This Nation can no longer tolerate an increasing population of noncitizen criminals. The American people made it very clear on November 8 that they expect us to eliminate the problem of criminal aliens, and this bill is a significant step toward doing that.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 13, 1995

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, because it was necessary for me to be in Pennsylvania on Friday, February 10, 1995, I regret that I was not present to vote on final passage of H.R. 668, the Criminal Alien Deportation Improvements Act, (Roll No. 118). Had I been present I would have voted "yea."